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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 001790

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STATE FOR AF/W
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POST FOR DEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/24/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: DRUG CHIEF REPLACED

REF: LAGOS 1768 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reason 1.4 (D)

[1](#)1. (U) Dr. Bello Lafiaji has been removed as Chairman of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and replaced by Ahmadu Giade, effective immediately.

[1](#)2. (U) Giade is a retired deputy commissioner of police, and in 1994 while on active duty he served on a panel investigating NDLEA corruption and evidence tampering. Post is attempting to gather additional information about the new Chairman.

[1](#)3. (C) No official reason was given for Lafiaji's removal, but Lafiaji's removal comes as the latest link in a chain of events including often tense meetings with Lafiaji and the Ambassador's intervention with President Obasanjo about the NDLEA's declining cooperation with us on counter-narcotics. In recent years NDLEA has focused primarily on apprehension of low-level narcotics couriers rather than targeting leaders and/or financiers of trafficking organizations. More disturbingly, instances where major figures have been initially detained have yielded no convictions and have been suspiciously dropped.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: After a mid-November meeting with the President, Lafiaji was mistakenly buoyed that he was in the President's good graces. Lafiaji joins a growing list of officials who have misread President Obasanjo's penchant for acting friendly toward his target as a prelude to abruptly dismissing him. In the end, the President apparently saw through Lafiaji's attempt to paint his organization as a vigilant one. The President also understood the gravity of the situation regarding GON narcotics trafficking performance and how it could stultify the bilateral relationship. Weighing this in the balance, Obasanjo quickly made the only reasonable decision -- telling Lafiaji his disservice was no longer needed. End comment.

BROWNE